

Council Meeting Summary

Tuesday, February 13, 2006

Council Members in attendance:

Elaine Brown - Michigan Food and Farming Systems, Jim Byrum - Michigan Agri-Business Association, Jean Chabut - MI Department of Community Health, Janet Cushman - MI Department of Human Services, Giancarlo Guzman - Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health, Mike Hamm - Michigan State University, Mitch Irwin (Chair) - MI Department of Agriculture, Jane Marshall - Food Bank Council of Michigan, Justin Rashid - American Spoon Foods, Inc., Dan Reeves - Associated Food Dealers of Michigan, Todd Regis - United Food & Commercial Workers Local 951, Dennis West - Northern Initiatives, Todd Wickstrom - Heritage Foods USA, Carol Wolenberg - MI Department of Education, Wayne Wood - MI Farm Bureau, and Irma Zuckerberg - MI Department of Labor and Economic Growth.

Other attendees:

Chris Bedford - Sweetwater Local Foods Market, Keith Creagh - Michigan Department of Agriculture, Rich Harlow - Michigan Department of Agriculture, Elizabeth Juras - Michigan Department of Agriculture, Jeanne Lipe - Michigan Department of Agriculture, Marla Moss - Michigan Department of Education, Sally Triant - Mixed Greens, Gordon Wenk - Michigan Department of Agriculture, and Gloria Zunker - MI Department of Education.

Director Irwin called the meeting to order at 1pm and welcomed the Council Members to the fourth meeting of the Michigan Food Policy Council. Director Irwin noted that Irma Zuckerberg will replace Dennis Sykes as DLEG's Council representative, and asked all the Council Members and public in attendance to introduce themselves.

Council Member Mike Hamm presented a brief summary of the MFPC's second Public Listening Session, held in Grayling on January 28, 2006. Council Members Mike Hamm, Mitch Irwin and Justin Rashid attended the session, which was held in conjunction with the Northern Michigan Small Farm Conference. Over 50 people attended the session with 12 oral comments and two written comments submitted. Council members received a "Grayling Listening Session Summary" in their pre-meeting packets of information. At the meeting, Council Members also received a chart summarizing the comments and public input submitted to the council to this point ("Public Input, Tally of Comments.") Staff will divide up the public input comments and distribute them to the appropriate task force(s) for consideration.

MFPC staff, Kristin Brooks, reviewed the reformatting of the recommendations, based on feedback from the council members at the December Council meeting. Recommendations A1 (Information and Collaboration Opportunities) and C1 (Department of Corrections) were quickly reviewed in the new format, as they were voted on and passed at the December Council meeting.

Director Irwin noted the voting procedures. Task Forces A, B, C and D each had recommendations for Council consideration. Director Irwin presented each recommendation and initiated discussion and voting.

The following is a summary of the discussion and voting process for each recommendation. The recommendations, as included below, reflect the original draft wording that was in front of the Council members. Amendments approved in the Council meeting will be incorporated into the recommendations and the final versions of the recommendations will be e-mailed to Council members.

Discussion of Recommendations:

Recommendation A2: Expand the impact of the Agricultural Processing Renaissance Zones (APRZs) Program.

Council members decided that this recommendation should be more inclusive, rather than focusing new APRZs on livestock and meat processing facilities. There was also some discussion about the criteria for “mini” APRZs, and ultimately the Council decided that while specific criteria will ultimately have to be determined, they should not be included in this recommendation.

✓The recommendation was passed, with amendments, with no objections.

Recommendation B5: Improve Access to Fresh and Healthy Foods through Direct Markets.

Discussion revolved around the distinction between this recommendation and Recommendation A3 (Groceries in Underserved Locations.) The Council ultimately decided that the two recommendations should remain separate, as they were developed in different contexts, and each involves distinct implementation strategies. State funding should be added as a precursor to any DCH funding of Senior Project FRESH.

✓The recommendation was passed, with amendments, with no objections.

Director Irwin excused himself to attend another meeting, and Deputy Director Keith Creagh assumed the duties of the Chairperson.

Recommendation C2: Support the development and institutionalization of the Select Michigan Program.

There was some discussion about the importance of developing consumer recognition of the Select Michigan logo, and the expansion of the program to incorporate year-round promotion of Michigan products in stores. Council members also discussed funding and partnerships for the program.

✓The recommendation was passed, with amendments, with no objections.

Recommendation A3: Increase the number of supermarkets and fresh food retail outlets that serve urban low-income populations.

The Council decided to table this entire recommendation until the MI Department of Human Services (responsible for administering the federal Food Stamp Program) develops an official position on the topic of food stamp issuance (part (b) of the recommendation.) This is expected from DHS within the next month.

Recommendation D1: Improve and expand the efficacy and propriety of Michigan State University Extension's agriculture services and service delivery.

The Council discussed the inclusion of entrepreneurship throughout the recommendation. Ultimately, the Council decided to more explicitly describe what MSUE's should focus on, which is expertise in business, product development, marketing, and innovation.

✓The recommendation was passed, with amendments, with no objections.

Recommendation B7: Improve Access to Fresh and/or Healthy Foods for Low-Income Children through the Summer Food Service Program.

The Council discussed the fact that MDE already sets goals for SFSP participation, but needed to publicize them better and the recommendation was modified to reflect this.

✓The recommendation was passed, with amendments, with no objections.

The recommendations discussed are all of the recommendations that have been developed to date.

The Council moved on to discuss an interim report for the Governor's office. The Council decided that any report would need to be approved by the entire Council prior to submission. There was also some question about the nature of the implementation strategies, and how and when departments are supposed to start implementing the recommendations. There was a comment that perhaps the Council's schedule could be accelerated to complete its work early, but ultimately, Council members decided that that is not a feasible option, considering the work yet to be done in the task forces.

Mr. Creagh adjourned the meeting after no further public comments were presented.

The next Michigan Food Policy Council meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 17, 2006, Constitution Hall, time to be determined.